

"Piece By Piece --- Dalmanutha!"

Text: Mark 8:15, "And He charged them saying, Take heed. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod."

Scripture: Mark 8:10-21

In striving to piece the puzzle of Jesus' whereabouts during this time in His life, we see that it is difficult to pinpoint just exactly where He was at a given time. The reason of course is that we do not have all of the facts at hand in order to determine this. As in the last two services we are at a place which is not definitely identified. Dalmanutha is the name of the city to which Jesus came according to our Scripture for tonight.

The name appears we are told in the best Greek manuscripts. This account takes place following the feeding of the 4000 and we can perhaps find a clue in Matthew's account, for he tells us that Jesus got into a boat and came to MAGADAN. Now Magadan or Magdala was a town that was located on the West side of the Sea of Galilee. And it is quite likely that Dalmanutha is another name for this town. Magdala is the town from which a certain Mary came from and thus she had the name Mary Magdalene. The ~~word~~ ^{word} Magdala means "fort" or "tower". The modern city of Mejdal is located there today and is located at a strategic point at a junction of the road along the lake from Tiberias and the road coming down from the hills into the plain through the Valley of Robbers. Thus we can probably say that Jesus ~~was located~~ at this point, was located on the West side of the Sea of Galilee.

The Pharisees came forth and sought a sign from Him we are told to test Him. They were interested in trying to get something on Him so they could accuse Him and bring Him to trial. They were looking for something like a thunder clap, or lightning, or some other miraculous feat. The Pharisees are interested in seeing what this man is capable of doing. But we read that He sighed deeply in His spirit, probably meaning that He drew a sigh of, "What's to use, these people will never learn." Probably much like we breathe a sigh of impatience with people at times.

Jesus flatly refuses to give them a sign, and since He could not get away from them on land He gets back into the boat with His disciples and they went

to the other side of the lake. Jesus tells His disciples to "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod."

But the disciples are not completely aware of what He is saying and so they talk it over among themselves and the only answer they can come up with is, that He is speaking about the fact that there is no bread with them. We need to understand at this point that the Jews were concerned about leaven. Leaven ~~ix~~ to us is yeast, or that substance we can add to bread to make it rise.

To the Jews it was a portion of a previous batch of dough that was saved to serve the purpose of fermenting the next batch of dough. When baking a little of the dough was held back to be used the next time. The real significance of all of this is to be found in the fact that when the Israelites left Egypt they were forbidden to have leaven in their possession. They could only have unleavened bread. Thus, during the Feast of The Passover, ~~XXXXX~~ the Israelites were forbidden to have leaven in their possession, or to have it in their household.

Leaven has a fermenting quality to it, or a bacterial action, and fermentation was a process of corruption. Thus fermentation or leavening of something was to make it evil, and so we can perhaps understand what Jesus was saying about the Pharisees and Herodians.

Jesus then questions His disciples further and reminds them of how many people were fed with very little, and how food was left over. He is telling them that He is sufficient for all and there is no need of any other food. He is pointing out that He is the Bread of Life, and that they are spiritually deaf and blind.

When we read incidents like these, the tendency is always there to make Jesus out to be a stern, hard taskmaster who is impatient with the stupidity of men. But if we strive to read between the lines, we can see instead a person who spoke with love and patience. Instead of showing anger, He more likely was showing love. He probably questioned them with a mild manner. He was dealing with a group of men who were not spiritually minded, and thus they thought in terms of bread which was for food and to be eaten to fulfill

ones hunger. This is the picture of Jesus that we should carry with us. The picture of a loving person concerned with getting His message across and taking the time and the patience to do so.

The point of all of this is that it is easy to be concerned with all the cares and problems of life. We can get hung up on just living each day. In this respect we are like the disciples. We think of food and clothing. We think of taking care of our material needs and then when we have time left over, we think of the things of the spirit. This is the temptation we all face, and it is not some isolated thing that just happened to a group of 12 men long ago. The problem is with us today as well.

We are besieged on all sides today by the promoters of all kinds of appliances, tools, conveniences and gimmicks. ~~This is what has gotten us into~~ We are led to believe that we cannot live properly unless we have a certain kind of washer and dryer. Or our teeth will fall out if we do not use a certain toothpaste. Or we will lose our charm and beauty unless we use a certain shampoo or other cosmetics. We are not in style unless we drive a new car of a certain brand. From all of this we see that we are involved in a spiritual battle on a spiritual battleground, which is a part of our everyday lives. The devil uses all sorts of gimmicks and devices to hurt us. And one big weapon is that of having us believe we cannot live without a lot of different things. One modern observer has wisely said, "The devil's greatest weapon is the belief that he does not exist." From this we can find a justification for the period of Lent. For Lent is a time to renew our lives by sorting out those things which are keeping us from being what God wants each of us ~~not~~ to be. It is a time to renew our loyalty to Jesus Christ and to come to Him anew, or even come to Him for the first time. It is a time to take our stand on the Side of Christ and to be aware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Herodians. ~~They knew what this leaven is, it is the leaven of~~ The leaven of the Pharisees was that of being self-righteous and smug. They knew it all, and they had a corner on the religion.

BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
WEDNESDAY EVENING LENTEN SERVICE FEBRUARY 19, 1975

WED. EVE. - 7:30 P.M.

PRELUDE MUSIC:	"PRELUDE"	BEETHOVEN
	"EVENSONG"	KOEPKE
SILENT MEDITATION		
*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 60 "SAVIOUR, BREATHE AN EVENING BLESSING"		
*INVOCATION - CHORAL AMEN		
SCRIPTURE LESSON: MARK 8:10-21		
*GLORIA PATRI		
*EVENING PRAYERS AND CHORAL RESPONSE		
OFFERING		
OFFERTORY	"SOFTLY & TENDERLY JESUS IS CALLING" THOMPSON	
HYMN No. 475	"SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER"	
SERMON:	"PIECE BY PIECE - - DALMANUTHA!"	
SERMON PRAYER		
*HYMN No. 55		
BENEDICTION		
STLUDE	"FANFARE"	LORENZ

IF YOU KNOW OF ANYONE LOOKING FOR A CHURCH HOME -
NEW MEMBERS WILL BE RECEIVED ON PALM SUNDAY. PLEASE
PLACE A SLIP OF PAPER OR ONE OUT OF THE PEW RACK
IN THE OFFERING PLATE OR GIVE TO REV. LINK AS YOU
LEAVE.

THE YOUTH WILL TAKE CHARGE OF USHERING TONIGHT.
DEACON AND MRS. WILLIAM PFLUGH WILL REPRESENT COUNCIL
AT THE DOOR TONIGHT.

BUTLER AREA LAYMENS DINNER THURSDAY
1:30 - SEE BOB TAIT, BILL PFLUGH, W. HANCOCK
DINNER HERE.

From all this we C we involve Spiritual battle 2/
on spiritual battleground, which part everyday lives
Dev'l use all sorts gimmicks/device 2 hurt us
1 ig weapon we cannot live without lot diff things
Mod observ wise said, "The devil's greatest weapon
is the belief he does not exist."

From all this we C justification for Lent
Lent time spend sort out lives/renew lives C what
keep us from G.
it time renew loyalty 2 Js Xp/or cum 2 Him anew/
or cum 2 Him 4 1st time

It a time we take stand on side of Xp & B aware
leaven of Phar & Herodians
The leaven Phars self-right & smug.
they knew it all/had corner on relig/no need uned.
hill billy preach tell how love worship G
they best peop walk face earth
their problem pride/satisfaction do or did

Leaven Herod was reach Byond all things of world
Herod interest conquest/have all could have
Amass goods/wealth at expense peop
he guilty intense grasp & cruelty
Thus Js caution against pride/cruelty
Js caution should ring in our egrs 2day as well
Like discips we quik ovlook great things happen pas
The ovlook feed 4M with little & worry no bread

We 2 forget things past, illness/recovered,
sorrow/overcame it, probs no solution/yet solved,
at wits end/somhow went on.
We C all these things we lean too much self
(ot enuf on Christ

Js speak 2 us same words which shared with discips,
"BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES, AND OF THE
LEAVEN OF HEROD."

Hertell us, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are
heavy laden and I will give you rest."

He call us 2 new commitment 2 Him, & 2 resist tempts
of devil.

He calling us make choices that right.

poem by F. HOWARD OAKLEY, written as to group men
or soldiers.

We must make choices tween leaven Phars or Herod,
or leaven of God.

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and of the leaven of Herod."

Scripture: Mark 8:10-21

Diff pinpoint Js whereabouts this time His life
not have all facts needed

last 2 servs no know/same tonite
Dalmanutha city in Scrip tonite/appr best MSS Gr
acct follow 4M feeding/perhaps clue Mt acct
he say "Js get boat/go other ~~xxx~~ side 2 MAGADAN"
MAGADAN/MAGDALA W. side S. of Gal
Dalmanutha could B nother name 4 this town
Magdala tn from which cum Mary Magdalene
" meant "Fort of Tower"
mod name MEJDEL & ~~xxxxx~~ at jct rd along Lake
from Tiberias & rd cum dn from hills into plain
thru Valley of Robbers.

Can see Js on W side S of Gal
Phar came 2 Him sot sign 2 test Him/2 accuse/trial
wanted litening/thunder/part of sea/ spectacular
We read, He sigh in spirit/prob sigh of "Whats use?"
He refuse/get in boat go other ~~xxx~~ side
Js tell discips TEXT (read)

Discips no understand think speak no bread
Explain leaven/bit of dough/no have use during Passov
Leaven evil/corrupt/ferment/bacteria,
thus Phar & Herod leaven bad

Js question discips bout feed 4M/ He tell He suffic
He bred of life/they sp. blind & deaf

We have tendency think Js mean, stern, angry
prob tell smile/ love/ humor

He & al men not spiritually minded, & bred mean eat
This picture Js must carry with us,
picture loving concerned person take time get
message across/take time patience do so.

Pt all this/it easy 2 B concern cares probs of life
can get hung up on living each day
this respect we like discips

we think food/clothing/material needs
if time left over we think spiritual things

This tempt we all face & not isolated thing
happen 12 men long ago

This prob with us 2day as well

We reigned all sides promoters gimmicks/appliances/
to s/conveniences etc.
We led 2 Blieve cannot live properly without cert
washer dryer/toothpaste/shampoo/cosmetics/car

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.